SPP Template – Part C (3)

Part C State Performance Plan (SPP) for 2005-2010

Overview of the State Performance Plan Development: see Overview of Kentucky's State Performance Plan Development Process document.

(The following items are to be completed for each monitoring priority/indicator.)

Monitoring Priority: EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES IN NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

Indicator 2 – Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who primarily receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children. (20 USC 1416(a)(3)(A) and 1442)

Measurement: Percent = # of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who primarily receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children divided by the total # of infants and toddlers with IFSPs times 100.

Overview of Issue/Description of System or Process:

The natural environments measurement system for Kentucky includes:

1. **Policies and procedures to guide implementation in natural environments**

2. **Provision of training and technical assistance supports to administrators and service providers in natural environments data collection, reporting, and use**

3. **Quality assurance and monitoring procedures to ensure the accuracy of the natural environments data**

4. **Data system elements for natural environments data input and maintenance, and natural environments data analysis functions**

Each of these is described below:

Natural environments in Kentucky means settings and service delivery systems that are natural or typical for the family and for the child's same-age peers who have no disability. This includes the home and other community settings in which children without disabilities participate. Natural learning environments are BOTH the places and opportunities where children experience everyday, typically occurring learning that promote and enhance their development. Natural environments are intended to allow parents to identify moments in their everyday lives to teach their child and ensure that learning and development occur within the child's daily routines and interactions.

1. Policies and Procedures to guide implementation in natural environments:

IDEA Section 303.312 (b) states: "to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the child, early intervention services must be provided in natural environments, including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate." Section 303.18 refers to "settings that are natural or normal for the child's age peers who have no disabilities." In Kentucky regulation 911KAR 2:130 Section 2 (4)(i)1-4, it states: Kentucky will ensure that families have access and knowledge of services that shall:

1) Be provided in as normal a fashion and environment as possible; and

2) Promote the integration of the child and family within the community;

3) Be embedded in the family's normal routines and activities; and

4) Be conducted in the family's natural environment, if possible, and in a way that services promote integration into a community atmosphere which includes children without disabilities.

The goal of First Steps is to increase the family's ability to understand and meet the developmental needs of their child through the use of natural resources and supports. First Steps service providers help the family to

understand the importance of using natural environments and offer them assistance to identify their natural supports, routines and resources and incorporate those into the delivery of all First Steps services. First Steps helps families use and strengthen those natural supports to build connections to their community and its resources. Outcomes and strategies in the IFSP indicate the functional skills that the child will learn to enhance development. These skills are embedded into natural routines and activities in which the child and family participate and documented within the IFSP. If providers do not provide services in the natural environment, a rationale must be supplied within the IFSP to explain. Kentucky policy provides a higher reimbursement rate to providers on a fee per service basis for services in natural environments as an incentive to providers for compliance. The nine (9) categories for environments which Kentucky gathers data on include: 1) Family/Guardian Home; 2) Day Care provider Home; 3) Day Care Center/Nursery School including typically developing children; 4) Early Intervention Center/Class for children with disabilities; 5) Early Childhood Center/Class including typically developing children; 6) Community locations (libraries, grocery stores, parks, restaurants, etc.); 7) Hospital/Clinic; 8) Residential Facility; 9) Other location . Please note in the data section that these categories were expanded for analysis. We have included additional categories since the requested data is changing and will be reported on February 1, 2007.

2. Provision of training and technical assistance supports to administrators and service providers in natural environments data collection, reporting and use

Training for natural environments implementation is included in Provider Orientation Training, Primary Service Coordinator (PSC) Introductory Training (web-based) and the five (5) day Service Coordinator training. All providers are exposed to natural environment technical assistance through PSC Quarterly Meetings and on-going technical assistance by the Technical Assistance Teams with questions regarding the subject.   Data is collected by Central Billing and Information System (CBIS) from information submitted by the PSC on the IFSP meeting form. This form will be put on-line for easy completion by the providers for data submission.

3. Quality assurance and monitoring procedures to ensure the accuracy of the natural environments data

Natural Environment data is collected on CBIS forms submitted by the PSC. In addition, surveys were mailed to all providers to further define compliance within Kentucky. Analysis of data occurs periodically and results are shared with the administrative team, the District Early Intervention Committees (DEIC), and the State Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). Providers are cited for not providing services in Natural Environments by the Program Evaluators when they do not list the setting on the progress report or in staff notes and/or do not have a justification for not providing services in natural environments on the IFSP.

From July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005, Kentucky's monitoring system reviewed a total of 169 providers either in Program Reviews or Complaint visits. During the monitoring process, the Program Evaluator checks to assure that services are provided in the natural environment. Of those reviewed fourteen (14) providers were cited for not documenting justification for not providing service in the natural environment. The providers had follow-up visits to ensure their future compliance in this area. At the follow-up visit all providers had corrected the non-compliance.

4. Data system elements for natural environments data input and maintenance and natural environment data analysis functions

Data for Indicator 2 is required to be taken from Section 618 data. In the past, Kentucky has had difficulty reporting natural environment data in the 618 data, because our data system recorded only whether services were delivered in the "home or community location," in the "office or center-based location," or in a "group setting." This has always been problematic. Kentucky captures data this way because our data system is primarily a centralized billing system. However, for the December 1, 2004 data tables due November 1, 2005 a survey was designed to capture better settings data. It was sent to all Primary Service Coordinators (PSC) who served children who received services between July 1, 2004 and June 30, 2005. Of 6,967 surveys sent to PSCs, 5,761 (82.7%) were returned in a mere three week period. This includes 2,992 (81.6%) of the 3,667 children in the Dec. 1, 2004 child count.

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KENTUCKY
State

In previous years, given the constraint on Kentucky's ability to provide settings data, the percentage reported in the home/community locations is shown in figure 1. Each year showed continued growth in the home/community settings.
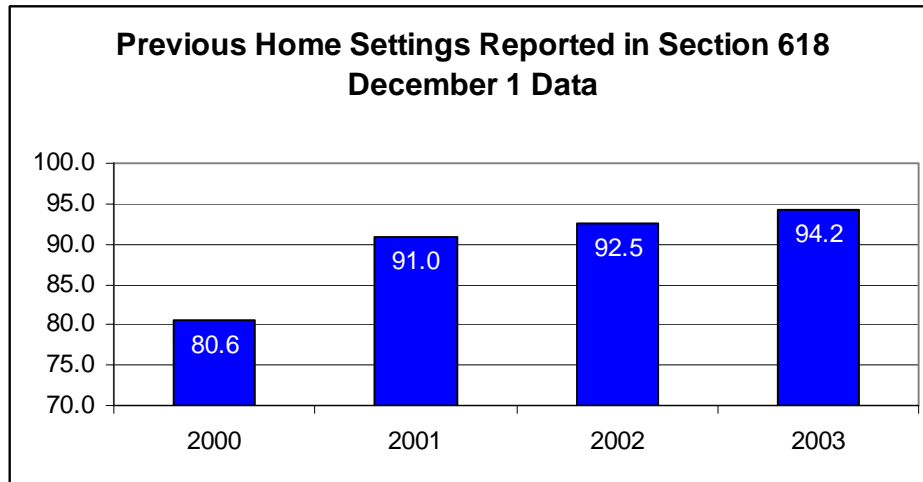
Previous Home Settings Reported in Section 618 December 1 Data

Year	Percentage
2000	80.6
2001	91.0
2002	92.5
2003	94.2

Figure 1

Baseline Data for FFY 2004 (2004-2005):

Data from Dec. 1, 2004 is not comparable to previous years, because we are now attempting to capture all categories specified in the Section 618 data, and will continue to do so. Data for the children identified with IFSPs on Dec. 1, 2004 for whom we collected surveys from the primary service coordinator in September, 2005 is shown in figure 2. Based on this data, fully 97% received services primarily in either home or community locations. Eighty percent alone received services in the family or guardian's home. This is possible in Kentucky because of the use of independent contractors who deliver services mostly in the home.
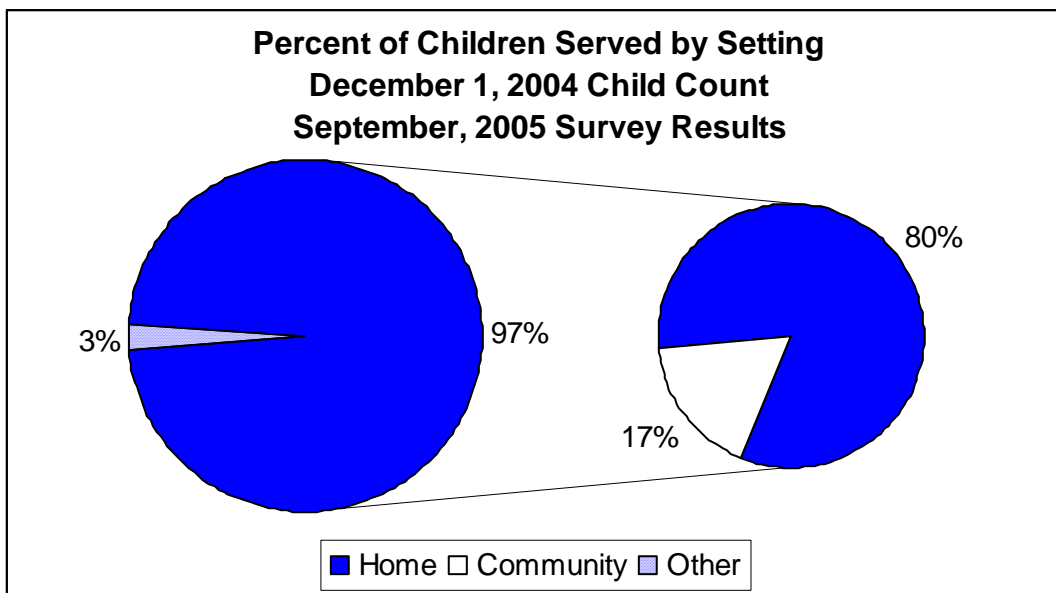
Percent of Children Served by Setting December 1, 2004 Child Count September, 2005 Survey Results

- 97%
- 3%
- 80%
- 17%

Home □ Community ■ Other

Figure 2

Surveys were sent to PSCs of *all* children who were served during our fiscal year. Like the Dec. 1 children, most all children served during the fiscal year received services in the home or community settings. Data for all children surveyed is presented below in Figure 3. Data are comparable to the Dec. 1 children, with 98% receiving services in the home or community settings.
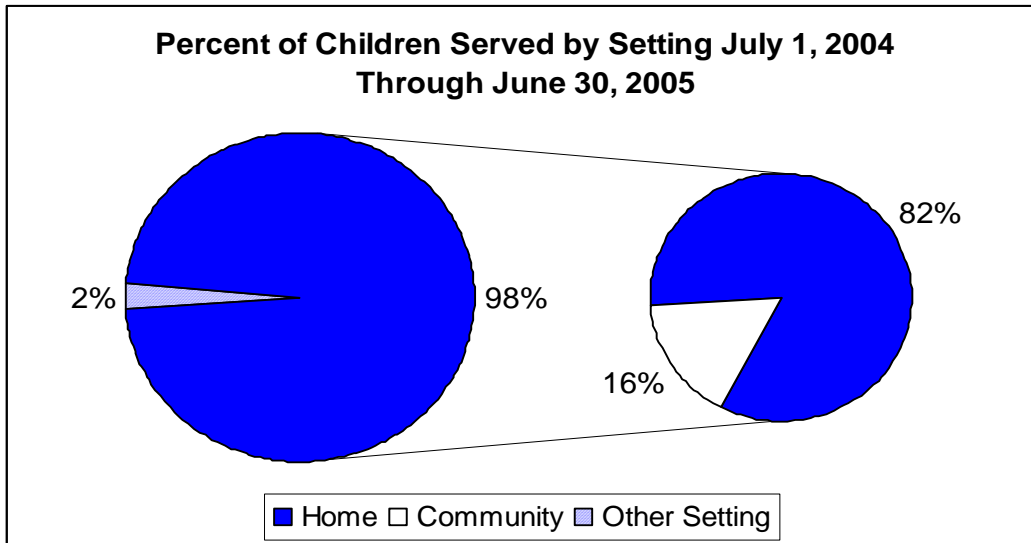
**Percent of Children Served by Setting July 1, 2004
Through June 30, 2005**

■ Home □ Community ▨ Other Setting

Figure 3

Figure 4 gives a breakdown for the Dec. 1, 2004 children based on individual settings categories. Most services in Kentucky are provided in the family or guardian home (80%). Another 11% are provided in day care centers or nursery schools including typically developing children, and 4% are provided in family day care homes. The remaining 2% of home and community services are delivered in early childhood centers or classes which include typically developing children. Settings that are *usually* considered to not be the child's natural environment make up the remaining 3% of children.
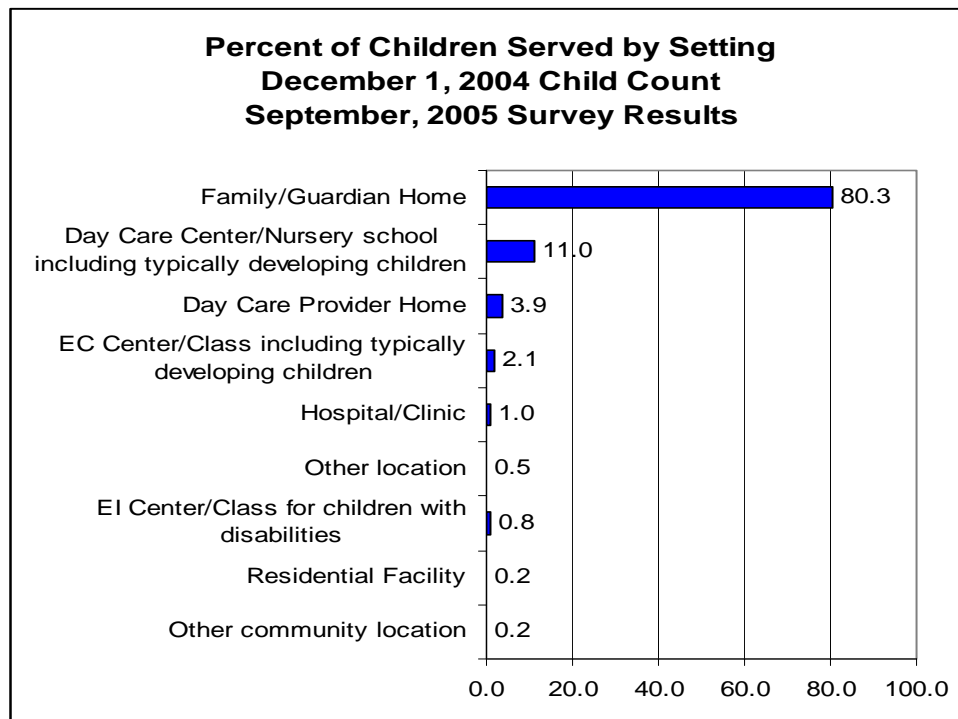
**Percent of Children Served by Setting
December 1, 2004 Child Count
September, 2005 Survey Results**

Figure 4

Kentucky is a state with several urban centers and many very rural locations as well. Children in the Dec. 1, 2004 child count were divided by counties considered to be urban or rural. Figure 5 shows the difference between children in Urban and Rural areas. Although the combined percentage of children in home and community settings is similar (98% rural children vs. 97% urban children), there is a difference in regards to services in the family or guardian home. Children in rural areas are more likely to receive services in the home than urban children (85% compared to 77%). This is most likely due to the travel difficulty in rural parts of the state.
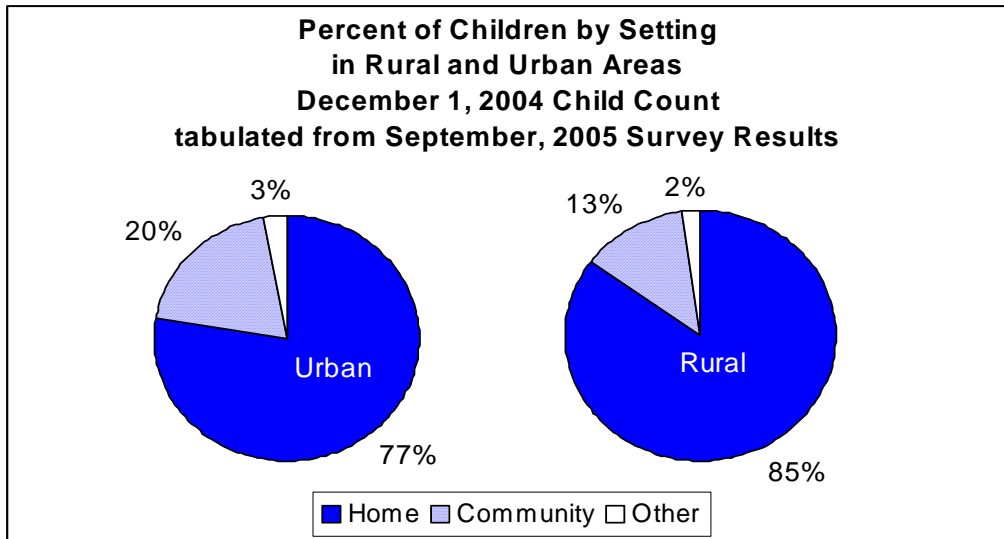

Figure 5

Finally, differences are noted in terms of ethnicity. Figure 6 shows that Whites and Hispanics are more likely to receive services in the family or guardian home than African-Americans (82% and 90% compared to 64%, respectively). African-Americans are more likely than Whites or Hispanics to receive services in community settings (34% compared to 16% and 10%, respectively). Thus, the overall percentage of home and community when combined is similar for all three groups (97.5% whites; 100% Hispanics, and 98% African-Americans). This discrepancy between home and community settings might partially explain the rural and urban differences shown in figure 5. African-Americans are primarily located in urban centers in Kentucky, and because they are more likely to receive community services rather than home services, the larger community service percentage also shows up among urban children.
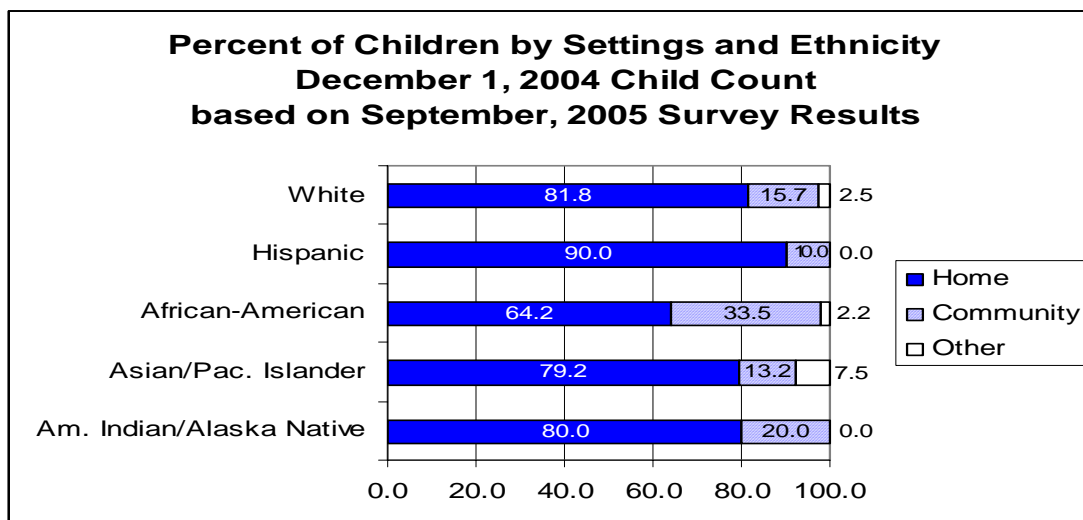

Figure 6

Discussion of Baseline Data: See specific figures above with narratives

The above data collected for services in Natural Environments reflects outstanding efforts on behalf of Kentucky's children and families. Kentucky looks forward to providing data reflective of our focus on providing all services in natural environments, and is proud of the accomplishments in this area with 97.4% of Kentucky children receiving services in home and community settings based on the 618 data. Kentucky plans to use the 618 data (97.4% in natural environments) rather than the survey data (98% in natural environments) for the purpose of setting targets since we will not be surveying for this information every year. Kentucky plans to increase that percentage by .05% per year for each of the six (6) years in the SPP. This target will get Kentucky to 97.7% of services in natural environments by 2010 and indicates a steady increase over time.

FFY	Measurable and Rigorous Target
2005 **(2005-2006)**	**97.45% of infants and toddlers will receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.**
2006 **(2006-2007)**	**97.50% of infants and toddlers will receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.**
2007 **(2007-2008)**	**97.55% of infants and toddlers will receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.**
2008 **(2008-2009)**	**97.60% of infants and toddlers will receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.**
2009 **(2009-2010)**	**97.65% of infants and toddlers will receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.**
2010 **(2010-2011)**	**97.70% of infants and toddlers will receive early intervention services in the home or programs for typically developing children.**

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources:

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY	TIMELINE	RESOURCES
1. Revise the data system to capture all nine (9) settings categories.	April 2006	Part C Coordinator; Data Analysis Director

2. Provide training to the Technical Assistance Teams on the nine (9) settings categories.	May 2006	Training Coordinator
3. Revise the six-month progress report requirements for therapeutic interventions to include data on the settings of all services delivered in that six months.	May 2006	Training Coordinator and Technical Assistance Teams
4. Train all providers on the nine (9) settings categories, the revised six-month progress report requirements and the revised data form to capture settings data.	June 2006 – August 2006	Training Coordinator; Technical Assistance Teams